

Remarks

Claims 1-108 are in the application, of which claims 1, 23, 41, 64, 80, 90, and 101 are in independent form. Original claims 10 and 17 are amended, and new claims 20-108 are added by this amendment.

In the specification, paragraphs [0001], [0047], and [0075] are amended to, respectively, update the statement of related applications, add a term "laterally centered" to state the inherent result achieved by the geometric conditions described, and more accurately state conditions initiating failsafe operation of the specimen contact mechanism. The amendments to original claims 10 and 17 recast the language to eliminate possible antecedent basis problems.

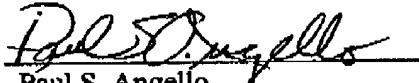
To comply with MPEP Section 713.04, applicants note that the amendments to paragraph [0075] of the specification and to original claims 10 and 17 were made after the September 16, 2004 personal interview. These amendments are reflected in new claims 37, 61, 62, 85, 88, 104, and 107.

Finally, applicants submit a Terminal Disclaimer to Obviate a Double Patenting Rejection Over a Prior Patent, together with a Statement Under 37 CFR 3.73(b), as indicated in the substance of interview section of the Interview Summary.

Applicants present claims 1-108 for examination.

Respectfully submitted,

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